

20th NOVEMBER

National Park Authorities	Natural Resources Wales	Third Sector
Brecon Beacons – John Cook, Geraint Hopkins Pembrokeshire Coast – Michael James, Tegryn Jones. Snowdonia – Caerwyn Roberts, Emyr Williams.	Peter Matthews Ceri Davies Keith Davies Carole Rothwell	Campaign for National Parks – Kate Ashbrook, Sue Goodfellow. National Trust Wales - Emma Plunkett Dillon RSPB Cymru - Sean Christian

NATIONAL PARKS WALES

Presentation

The 3 NPs have a very special place in history and culture in Wales, protecting a special landscape, enjoyed by millions of visitors. Proud of our achievements. Especially since special purpose NPAs were created. Reviews have recognised good work and their recommendations have shaped the Parks. Hope this review will put in place structures and frameworks that will influence the landscapes over coming decades

Now is a time for change. The needs of 21st century Wales require change – building on past success, build a real connection between NPs and the people of Wales.

The 3 NPAs are committed to playing a full part in helping WG to deliver long term goals of sustainable development (SD). Piloted and developing SD initiatives. We have experience of integrating economic, social, environmental objectives and can share this with others. Health and wellbeing role should be expanded. Key tourism destination accepted, but less so the role in facilitating vibrant communities and providing viable places to live and work. No evidence of NPs as museums. Always sought language, culture, social priorities. Need to make changes to further support our communities.

Recognise planning is not in remit of the Review, but it would be incomplete without reference to it. It's a critical tool in enabling NPs to delivery responsibilities. Retaining the function is essential to ensuring the future of NPs and local accountability.

Key changes – please see submission document.

Environment Bill and Future Generations (FG) Bill – opportunity to review NP management plans to be wellbeing plans and natural resource management (NRM) plans.

3 strong brands – new designation risks diluting this brand. But opportunities for strengthening links with other designations.

Welsh NPs not NPs in Wales.

What are the challenges, and opportunities, facing Wales' designated landscapes over the medium to long term?

JC - Difficult to know what future holds. Big challenge is to maintain and also improve the relevance of what we do and what we are for society. NPs need to continue to change. Key thing – NPs in Wales must be and become, and be seen as, Wales' NPs, not NPs that happen to be in Wales. A strong national and international asset for economy and growth. Need to create a sense of pride and ownership amongst those that live in them, as well as by others in Wales. More like in Scotland. Contributions to health and wellbeing - challenges because of resources needed. More research on what the NPs can do for preventative contribution. Alongside traditional areas of conservation.

How NPs can contribute more to poverty reduction.

In an ideal world, what further positive contributions can the designated landscapes make to Wales?

JC - Wellbeing. Economic development. Social inclusion.

SDF is good example of leveraging, 5-1.

Economic development is partly reflected within the duty but it is not a purpose.

Want to legitimise it, and make us accountable for it (which it isn't when it's a duty).

Within increasing constraints, think NPAs can deliver on some things better because of its focus.

TJ – Very fluid public service landscape. Always tried to advocate that NPs need to fit in that Welsh picture. Fitting priorities of Programme for Government is key. Some of the existing purposes might be slightly disengaged from that. Advocating new purposes – they do them despite the legal situation, not because of it. If changed, NP ability to support the wider agenda would improve, e.g. tackling poverty. Would support changes NPs have already made.

MJ – Especially obesity within wellbeing. Could work with the National Health Service. Walking opportunities. Already working closely with schools for education purposes.

EW – Slight disconnect between landscape and natural resource management. Challenge of climate change. Coastal issues. Upland issues. Environment Bill – opportunities there, but some naivety in the drafting of the bill; 'due regard to' concern, but see opportunity for NPs to contribute to this as a quick fix.

NRW haven't got strong relationships with protected landscapes on a pan-Wales basis; we're waiting for the engagement to happen. NP Management Plan needs to be elevated, e.g. debated in front of politicians, so proper ownership. Paying for Ecosystem Services – NPs can pioneer.

It's a conundrum for NRM, but there is no direct market for the resources, and ownership of the resources is in private ownership so out of control – how do you get over that?

? - Specific agri-environment schemes for NPs. The NP history of how they engage with land management scheme is good. Have piloted schemes that have been mainstreamed. Wish to have things delivered more locally; a more regional approach would be beneficial to the environment. Exact mechanism could be too difficult for NPs on their own, but could work in partnership.

JC – NPs bring to the table a clear understanding of ecosystem services, how they can be exploited and paid for – already working with WG on this. This is the ultimate direction for the long term. In discussion with Health Board – wanting to offset carbon emissions – has led to many opportunities, including smallscale hydro they can invest in. Also pointed out the opportunities there may be on their own estate [the Health Board] – an honest broker using an understanding that they don't have. BBNP also in discussions with Dŵr Cymru – encouraging them to look at upland restoration up the catchment as opposed to engineered solutions, but will take time.

EW – Tyr Cymen, Tir Gofal – added socio-economic value. NP purposely has small contracts for environmental work so that it's more viable for local businesses to compete and money stays locally. RDP – it would be a really positive move if NPs were designated as RDP areas, but populations are too low to qualify for the threshold.

TJ – Tourism and problems of not managing the land. Pembrokeshire's Coast Path – ownership is entirely private, but management is with NP and NRW support. First priority for communities is to ensure that Coast Path is maintained because it's valued. On fairly marginal land, so has been a catalyst for biodiversity work, e.g. coastal slopes project. i.e. not just a rights of way and economics project. A question as to whether it can ever be some sort of payback scheme – this would need to come from the tourism industry. Maybe parking charges provides the best option.

GH – Economic benefits of tourism mustn't be overlooked. Lots of local shops would be closed without the tourists, keeping the towns vibrant.

EW – We learnt a lot about tourism power during Foot & Mouth. SNPA has extended the season and the resource through lowland paths. An economic development tool.

**What could National Parks be delivering for Wales in 25 years' time?
Environment Bill means that we could be in a total Natural Resources
Management world (if you take this to nth degree).**

TJ – To improve the wellbeing of people of Wales, in summary. A theme running through – to do that is to look at areas such as economic development, ensuring vibrancy of local communities, broaden access, tackle poverty. Access –

traditionally, physical access. Now recognising 'mental' access is also important. Need to provide support to enable people to access NPs. In relation to natural resources management (NRM), our suggestions for the purposes have tried to be very explicit. We can do this, but need the review to advocate this element of change.

EW – We can simplify complexity well. Show what integrated management is all about. Concerned that the 3 pieces of legislation are being developed separately; would like to see them integrated.

Still advocating a hierarchy? Yes.

JC- By having protected landscapes and authorities to look after them, you have a concentration of expertise and passion to look after them. If overall NRM, who will deliver it? Local Authority budgets are being slashed. It's what NPAs are there for, they have accountability. They're leading the way and developing the resource bank for others. Can share over Wales for the benefit of all Wales. But need protection for some of Wales' landscapes. E.g. NPs have protected landscapes while looking at alternative forms of energy, rather than mid Wales wind farms.

TJ – Marine experience. Designations exist but not really managed. So yes, can have the designation with a value in its own right, but only scratching the surface unless you have some form of management.

What are you advocating in terms of marine?

TJ – Artificial boundary with the sea. Pembrokeshire NP – islands are in the NP, but sea in between isn't. Marine designations are looking to gain the profile of NPs. Change of legislation would allow for a debate of what to do.

You're advocating a new set of purposes. Various issues. Does your 2nd purpose lose something from the current 2nd purpose? The 3rd purpose (sustainable economic wellbeing). Does the Sandford principle stand? Is it a hierarchy? Who do you want these purposes to apply to? E.g. more effectively across the public sector than they have been.

TJ – Advocated 4 purposes. Rewording of current two – an economic and a natural resources purpose. Current 1st purpose works quite well – would like a clearer definition included of cultural heritage. Replace 'natural beauty' with 'landscape'. Suggesting a tweaking to make it more relevant and understandable. Define landscape to include natural beauty.

Current 2nd purpose – want to move more to wellbeing, tackling poverty, i.e. a wider approach. For local communities and the public.

JC – social wellbeing can be best reflected by a subtle shift. Promotion and understanding can be beneficial for local communities and visitors. Wording isn't sacrosanct. We mean wellbeing for local communities and Wales overall.

Sustainable economic wellbeing and natural resources are additional purposes. JC – key thing of economic purpose is sustainability. Not economic development at the expense of everything else. Legitimising what NPs are already doing. Also increasing profile within local communities about economic development through being a statutory purpose, and it makes NPs accountable for it. Would make it possible to deliver more effectively – prosperity, cohesiveness.

TJ - Makes it possible to pick up what Local Authorities may be less able to do in future with budget cuts – not taking over what Local Authorities do, but enables NPAs to give greater consideration in an appropriate manner.

Wording is important. Why ‘promote’ in latter principles?

TJ – Reflects a partnership. With the current powers, we have the ability to deliver the first purpose as a unit ourselves. But for the other three, it needs to be far more of a partnership approach.

EW – Don’t know where the legislation will go, so need to be careful.

RW – Need a robust designation that will last another 60 years.

JC – Not sure we can answer why ‘promote’. Everything is through partnership. Could be ‘promote’ in all or none. The wellbeing and economic wellbeing should be aligned to the designation, not just to the body looking after them. Don’t want isolated, depopulated landscapes. It’s the people who live and work in the landscape who shape it.

Subtle difference between ‘gwella’ and ‘enhance’.

TJ – Is there a difference between the criteria for designation and the purposes? Would be beneficial to keep them as unified as possible.

4th designation on NRM?

EW - Bringing us into line with what we do and what expectations on us are. Well placed to deliver it. Need to be acknowledged and empowered to do it.

Sandford?

TJ – The bigger picture is why are we protected areas. The first principle is key. A controlling mechanism. Is there an issue within the 1st purpose? Thinks the other 3 are well balanced anyway. NPs are Category 5. Would put at risk that status if didn’t have this mechanism. Although there are different views around England and Wales about the importance of this international status.

AONBs are included in this review – so apply these purposes to AONBs?

EW – Difficult to answer. Can see the advantages to have the same opportunities and funding.

JC – Difficult. Answers have focussed on NPs because that’s what we understand. It’s inextricably linked with governance. AONBs embrace the concepts National Parks Wales is suggesting. But have they got the tools to deliver within existing structure and designation? Don’t want to insist on hierarchy.

EW - AONBs also deliver more than charged to do.

Would it strengthen NPs if AONBs have same designation? If they have equal status, why don't they have equal purpose?

JC – NP has international brand recognition. Lose that brand at our peril, for the country. Also, a resource issue. Whilst fully supportive of AONBs as protected landscapes and same purposes, don't want to dilute resources any further.

Management plan would be a stronger document?

JC – There is talk of a concept of an overarching management plan for all protected landscapes in Wales – a high level strategic joint management plan, with local delivery priorities and action plans.

EW – Knows the evolution of Snowdonia NPA from Council department. Sees the benefit. Recognises the differences around Wales. Sees opportunities for efficiencies of working more closely together.

Does a 2 tier system act as a barrier?

No.

TJ – Already examples of working together well. Would be facilitated by having same purposes. Opportunities for more creativity maybe.

JC - Yes, definitely. But don't want to be seen to take over AONBs in Wales. Which has maybe diluted views on potential leadership role for NPs. Not making a bid to take it all over from Local Authorities.

If have economic development as statutory purpose, no longer closely aligned with NRW. How would NP relationship with NRW evolve?

TJ – 5 years ago, would have presented a more defensive position. But NPs have changed so that they are more confident to be proactive and take on a leadership role. Would have an effect for relationships with other organisations, including NRW. NRW doesn't provide the leadership that CCW did for protected landscapes.

Understand the difficulties of establishing a new organisation. Would like to see NRW to take more of a leadership role. But NPs want to take a leadership role for designated landscapes too, so aiming for a partnership approach, of equals.

EW – Can't see a problem. Might put more pressure on NRW to promote the landscape purpose. But NRW as a significant economic body in its own right offers opportunities for NPAs to learn more about commercial awareness.

People care about places. If the places are under threat, that's what they'd protest about. Not administrative arrangements. So if so, wouldn't it be in the public interest to look at one designation?

JC – Depends what it materialises as. They come to BBNP because it's been managed in a way that makes them want to visit it. The standards must apply equally across the designation.

EW – People have special places within each NP they want to visit. People want to link up with and protect local and regional level places, in this age of globalisation.

JC – You don't know what you've got till it's gone. Brecon businesses – some were concerned when they thought the NP might go.

CR – Blaenau Ffestiniog example, and Llanberis. Both contacted CCW in 2008/9 wanted to come into NP, as they thought it would benefit them.

TJ – Something very intangible. 9 out of 10 reasons people give for visiting Pembrokeshire is the NP. Management of NP is really important to that. Keeps the view of Tenby's North Beach what it is. Local communities don't tend to support the concept of 1 designation – concern about unintended consequences.

MJ – Big whisky and water companies that sell their products off the back of the Brecon Beacons.

Would a single designation strengthen the brand?

JC – Possibly. Practicalities – confusion for what AONBs would be seen as. Concern for dilution. What do you call the current protected landscapes that aren't NPs if you have a single designation?

TJ – Concern that the process of creating a new designation will be very lengthy. Expect it would have to include a boundary review to see what else meets the criteria. Don't want a 10 year review of boundaries.

MJ – National Geographic vote for Pembrokeshire Coast – best advert for NPA. Need the close relationship with landowners. Businesses are also very important, including micro-businesses.

Relationship with Local Authorities – how would you see that emerging?

Any need to extend duties and purposes so LAs take them on board?

MJ – There are some things we do better than LAs, e.g. public rights of way. So maybe we can help them.

TJ – NPAs made the case to Williams Commission for separate authorities, and pleased that this has worked. Local dimension will be provided by NPAs, which will be important as local authorities become bigger organisations. Section 62 duty – not functioning at present, therefore want to strengthen the mechanism. Want bodies such as Local Authorities to have to report annually how they have taken account of it. We're not against Local Authorities – there's a massive amount of joint working.

EW – Gwynedd Local Authority is looking to a more collaborative approach, especially in SNPA providing a supporting role for Llŷn AONB.

GH – Local Service Boards don't take into account what NPAs do, but hopes new Public Service Boards (PSB) will.

JC – If PSBs work right, they could do a lot to embed sustainable development (SD) within the public sector. The NP management plan could be the wellbeing plan and the NRM plan for NPs. Question about how it would relate to PSB's plans. Enhances the need for the S62 duty to be much stronger than 'have regard to'.

Closing comments

JC - For future generations, for protected landscapes, have we got what they're there for right for the next 50 years?

NATURAL RESOURCES WALES

Apologies Emyr Roberts

Opening statement

PM - Landscapes are an extremely important part of whole picture for NRW. Highly relevant to NRW purpose. Various powers and duties. We work in partnership with NPs and AONBs on a range of issues, including emerging NRM. Also we manage AONB Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) on behalf of WG.

CD - Wants to highlight the evidence submitted. Importance of designated landscapes in Wales – research commissioned by NRW in recent years shows their importance, including importance to economy, and importance to the people of Wales. Also, 38% of jobs in NPs are related to the environment (Census 2011). Designated landscapes operate today within completely different context to 1940s, e.g. halting biodiversity loss, energy and food security, climate change, aging population, public sector austerity. Want to maximise the ability for us all to work together for the benefit of Wales. Complex issues to deal with in future that will need horizontal working. NRW can help to deliver in this new context: continued support for the role of designated landscapes and as strategic important assets for Wales; how we can work together to deliver the transformation needed to deal with these issues.

Reform the purposes? Would pick out SD and ecosystem approach, as well as current ones. New purpose of NRW has driven them to think in different ways, driving different outcomes and decisions – so a good example. Key element of work that NPAs and AONBS need to play in Wellbeing and Future Generations bill – strengthening of their role within PSBs, so that the NP and AONB management plans they produce are linked to the PSB plans. Want NRW, NPAs and NPs to be able to demonstrate together how it's possible to work with the environment.

Single designation? Would require significant legislative change, so unconvinced it's the right thing to do. Instead, modernise the purpose, strengthen ability to deliver wellbeing and Future Generations, due regard in reporting requirements of wellbeing and Future Generations, ?? Env Bill.

The value added study you refer to, is it the Arup study? Yes

Is the NRW purpose provided in submission the full thing?

CR – It's a summary.

PM – A broad envelope within which NRW has duties and powers, and also more flexibility to address what's expected of us.

CR – It's all Wales. We exert influence through full range of duties – as regulators, land managers, principle advisor to WG including policy development.

PM – A legal mandate to become more proactively involved in development, helping Wales to move forward with SD and development.

35% of Wales land area – what does this refer to?

CR – Former Forestry Commission land, NNRs, NPs, AONBs. NRW, NPs and AONBs have influence over a substantial part of Wales.

More on purposes – is the NRW purpose the sort of purpose you'd recommend we apply to DLs?

CD – 1) Similar to NRW sustainable use of natural resources, 2) promoting sustainable economic and social development of communities. Wanting to take on board the key elements of current legislation.

PM – We're expecting differences in governance between NPs and AONBs, but possibility for a common purpose. This would bring them together. This opens up opportunities for common branding. Sense a mood of bringing them together, but not necessarily a single designation under law, in order to create the harmony people are looking for.

We're looking ahead another 60 years, so any shift in purpose wording must be future-proofed. What do you think the long term vision is for designated landscapes?

PM – If we think about the role of these bodies in relation to looking after our place, the landscape, and put ourselves in the place of our clients – we have all these designations, e.g. NNRs, RAMSAR sites and they are unsure how they all fit together – so anything that helps to engage our customers (including politicians) will be very helpful. An accretion of years of thinking about protecting where we live, but how can it be brought together in some sort of meaningful whole? Language is really important to this.

Why no mention of wellbeing?

CD - We're trying to keep it as simple as possible, avoid flavour of the month terminology. But important in terms of driving the culture. In NRW purpose, looked at other similar organisations, and tried to find straightforward, more easily understood language.

Vision of designated areas in terms of NRW remit. Why do we need designated landscapes? If there's an integrated NRM paradigm being developed, could say that will be robust. Keep a hierarchy of designations?

PM – Difficulty is fitting together everything that's going on. NRW understands the issues of health wellbeing etc., but also very mindful of Wales as the world's leading green economy. We see designated landscapes as really important enablers

towards that. NRM areas will have integrated plans, probably based on catchments but recognise that there are political and geographic entities that cut across these, e.g. LAs, PSBs, landscapes. Also, don't see NRW as running Wales from the environmental perspective, see ourselves at the centre as an enabler. Sense that if we had blank sheet, we would be advocating partnerships to enable the purposes to be delivered.

Current situation with NRM areas?

CD – NRM areas will cover all Wales. 3 pilot areas at present to develop the tools and techniques.

What's the distinctive function of DLS in this context?

An experienced two bodies with experience of delivering national policy at local level. With governance and accountability. With existing links with stakeholders. Management plans that look to the future. So there are already some existing mechanisms, in a way that NRW doesn't have.

PM – Catchments issue – wanted to start work now before the Bill is passed. The plans will be all-embracing including waste, farm management etc. Have to understand the ways these areas sit within the broader geographical and political landscape. Local Authority boundaries wouldn't work, they change. But recognise that Local Authorities have an important role to play, and PSBs. So plans must include inter-catchment issues. The plans would make contributions to the NP management plans. The trials are looking to see how this would work, and what would work for the customer as well as NRW.

CD – Ambition maybe that if you get the full co-operation of all organisations that have responsibilities, might be that in future you don't need designated landscapes. But being pragmatic, and it's not a blank sheet, so need something that keeps us in the right direction.

What are the special features of designated landscapes in the context of NRM?

CD – Anything that connects people to the environment to bring about the behaviour change we need to head towards a sustainable future.

PM – A focus on landscape, at the highest level. So it will be embedded in all our plans. In some cases, there will be special landscapes. But what separates designated landscapes from undesignated? NRM enables NRW to take account of the need of all landscapes.

Direction of travel of NRM & ultimate trajectory – if happens as envisaged, why have any form of designation?

CD - A developing picture, what can we contribute to it? Realise the opportunities that are out there now, within which NPs and AONBs can contribute. But can always come back and ask about something different if it doesn't work.

People care about the places, not the admin arrangements.

CR – This is what makes NPs and AONBs so different, the interaction between human and the environment leading to landscapes, which is what people value. They're bigger areas than SSSIs, they take into account the human element. This is what people relate to.

PM – Brought up on Romney Marsh, now in the Fens. I feel challenged by Snowdonia, comfortable in the Gwent Levels. This shows the subtlety of landscape.

NRM – seems that there is a weakness – if NRM is done wrongly, it'll have huge societal effects. But there are no obvious markets for its resources.

Financial levers lay beyond NRW, so how much of a problem is this?

CD – Financing will be really important. But will be looking for NRM plans to identify if there are significant things to fund, which will be as important as planning etc.

Expects WG to pull the levers to get the resources to stack up behind the plans.

Needs joined-up government. NRW can't do it on its own, will involve co-operation and collaboration across Government and their resources for these plans. State of Natural Resources report – looks at Wales on the Wales scale. Policy levers will be needed also.

PM – Need to pin down the terminology, so that everyone uses the same language and has the same understanding. NRW believes very much in SD and NRM as a very important part of secondary education so that school leavers are fit for the green economy, and have the right language. Wants to create a really powerful case for how we manage our environment. There's a really powerful argument for a consistent environmental view on development – we support development, but in a sustainable way. Needs a mindset change, and then NRM can become an economic driver. Getting this right is the very underpinning of farming, tourism etc.

Purposes and duties. In particular NRW's duties towards NPs and AONBs. What's driving the change in NRW's proposed purposes? And how do you want to see the relationships with NPs and AONBs?

CD – When you bring organisations with common outcomes together, you have different working relationships which follow. The purpose has brought NRW to think differently, different to what any of the legacy bodies would have done previously. It provides an opportunity for multiple perspectives on an issue, which may bring a different response. Identify what each organisation brings to the table, and achieve more together.

Your proposals for the purposes – i) do you see the Sandford principle still applying? ii) a) is to conserve and enhance, b) c) and d) are to promote – deliberate?

CR –ii) Looked at Scottish NPs and don't need to be verbatim. Knows Scottish NPs have been grappling with dealing with multiple agendas, don't think current purposes do this.

i) Sandford – will be determined by the wording of the purposes. But would need to be an enhanced Sandford enshrined in law. Helpful to have as a last resort.

Category 5 depends on this.

PM – Experience of NRW might be helpful. Was an opportunity to think about what sort of organisation they wanted to be. Still in development, all sorts of things happening. At the beginning, we introduced the concept of responsibility. A responsibility matrix. What is each role responsible for? Terms of responsibility for committees – ends up different to terms of reference. So...what would you like these bodies to be responsible for? This then helps to shape the governance etc.

CD – Shows the importance of the terminology. 'Promote' – does mean doing, to her. E.g. NRW promoting angling has involved getting access to angling. Delivery often has to be through the people who own the land, so in that situation, NRW needs to recognise the support they need, and wording of 'promote' allows for this.

There are duties at the moment; NRW suggestion is for term 'have due regard' – is this the right wording? Is it strong enough? Whoever is looking after the designations, has due regard to b, c and d. And a is core. So looking for a two way due regard through the right wording.

CD – Balancing isn't always possible, sometimes it's about weighing. Yes, we'd go with the priority of the first purpose. NRW is an environmental organisation, but still has a variety of duties that need to be weighed. It's subtle.

Concept of responsibility. If there are 4 purposes, including a stronger socio-economic role, and all purposes are subservient to the first purpose, what is NRW's role? Is it the keeper of the national conscience?

PM – NRW has responsibility for many things, which other organisations also have responsibility for, e.g. NPs. So there's an extra special relationship between NRW and NPs, so yes, but not exclusively. If talking about a convergent model, it's been identified historically that there's a need for bodies with particular responsibility for planning in NPs. How can specific responsibilities be translated into a specific purpose? May be extraordinary requirements for planning inside a NP that you don't have elsewhere. Extraordinary and distinctive.

One designation issue. Why have two?

CD – Concentrate on the outcomes we're trying to achieve, rather than the process of getting there. To get to a single designation, there'd be lot of legal and process work. Would want a more straightforward process.

PM – There are a number of practical factors, e.g. size. If you had a convergent purpose and brand, then the execution of that could have alternatives according to size, local governance etc.

CD – Current budget constraints. Don't want to miss the opportunity presented by current legislation changes.

Would it help NRW if there was a single designation?

PM – No.

CR – I did an evaluation of Environment Bill. Currently, there's nothing stopping NRW on what needs to be done, so just want to get on with it.

PM - Issues of branding. Potential communicationss benefits of a single brand.

SUMMARY

NRW can provide more info on NRM if required. NRW has developed an interim approach document to introduce the concept – will send this to the Panel.

Communication – maybe NRM plans will have a local nomenclature.

Does the amount of plan making in the Bills worry you?

CD – Yes. At the very soonest point, need to bring them together. NRW has ideas of how these will fit together – will send a slide they've devised to describe this.

PM – NRW are on a trajectory of reorganising themselves around what they anticipate the Environment Bill will require.

Will the allocation of NRW staff time around landscape be more streamlined in future?

CD – Yes. Looking to ensure that NRW delivers along its breadth, but streamlined as much as possible, integrated where possible. Initial emphasis was on ability to function and continue to deliver; now looking at how best to deliver, transformation, looking for common areas where they can work together to get better outcomes. But including retention of distinctive elements. Got to have the experts e.g. in the landscape team, to be able to deliver.

CAMPAIGN FOR NATIONAL PARKS/NATIONAL TRUST WALES/RSPB CYMRU

Opening Statements

CNP

Long involvement in NPs. We remember the vision of the early pioneers and want to keep that. NPs are very important for people, benefits for wildlife, clean water, health wellbeing, social inclusion e.g. Mosaic. Sense of place, within culture of Wales and wider. International importance should be acknowledged and valued. Suggest strengthening and broadening the purposes. S62 duty should be a firm duty 'to further National Park purposes' not just 'have regard to'. NPs have so much to offer to Wales, UK, internationally - celebrate them.

This sense of history is very important – what about AONB development?

1947 Hobhouse report – focus on other areas. A distinction even then.

NT WALES

Cares for some of the most special places in Wales, including about 35,000 ha in NPs and AONBs. Align to general NT strategy. NPs are key stakeholders in delivering these objectives. Long worked with all 3 NPs. Very positive relationship with AONBs although extent of this depends on ability of the AONB to deliver.

We welcome evolving designations to meet changing needs of people in Wales.

Principles to explore further:

- See NPs as having very distinctive brand that puts Wales on the map, and don't want to lose that.
- Don't want to see removal of the special provisions and safeguards. NPs need to be able to retain control over threats. Want NPs to retain planning powers, as this enables them to retain their unique qualities.
- Designated landscapes able to hold onto their uniqueness, so that local people want to have a stake in them.
- 4 pillars – conservation, understanding and enjoyment, natural resources planning, wellbeing.

RSPB CYMRU

Echo other organisations' comments. Support the principle of designated landscapes. Believe they have a vital role to play in nature conservation. Need to put emphasis on first purpose, not just keeping the scenery – that comes about because of the natural systems. Other aspirations are great, but the critical central role is paramount.

The purposes are appropriate, don't need to be supplemented. If changes, only to emphasise further the first purpose. Enhancement and restoration are key to balancing against the continuing loss of biodiversity. Vital opportunity for landscape scale recovery. Key role in promoting a coherent ecosystem approach to conservation and NRM, and ensuring that nature conservation and cultural heritage are at the core of NRM. Need to be exemplars of good practice.

Recent evidence is that there's no real reason for an overhaul. No evidence that system is unfit. No need for root and branch reform. Evidence suggests that big change is disruptive, resource hungry, time-consuming. A question of whether change would improve delivery for nature, on the ground.

Legislation is sound, it's the implementation that falls down. To some extent, it's to do with resourcing, to some extent prioritising. Also, are we monitoring to know what we're achieving? Any mechanism must be well resourced and enforced.

NPs and AONBs are places for people to visit and enjoy. And should be able to deliver primary purpose, and secondary purposes, if well managed.

What are the challenges, and opportunities, facing Wales' designated landscapes over the medium to long term? What's the vision for the long-term?

NT – Big challenges is people's expectations of what they'll get from these landscapes. People are becoming more demanding, have higher expectations, can access information more rapidly, understanding of what infrastructure they expect to find there. Holding on to core principles, but yet also meeting the expectations of society.

CNP – Ensuring these places remain relevant to people, that people feel they're relevant. Political reality is that everything is geared to the 5-6 year term of government, so really hard to get long term thinking. Keeping them as areas where so many good things can happen. Also, constantly subjected to pressures of the modern world, so some element of keeping them as places where things don't happen. Things not happening is a very positive thing.

RSPB – A demonstration function. Biggest challenge is for all of Wales' landscape – socio-economic change and desire for development. Danger of losing what we've got in these tremendously special places. Unprecedented losses of biodiversity, on which the resilience of our systems rely. Agricultural changes, e.g. pasture improvements, livestock intensification and abandonment – driven by economics,

having widespread landscape changes. Nature's at breaking point. One of the functions of NPs is to hold the line; in these areas, we have to prevent this loss.
NT – Can show state of the art development, e.g. Hydro. Big challenge – all facets of climate change, e.g. coastal adaptation, energy generation.
CNP – It's about living as well. Challenge for NPs – quite remote places, general lack of services, long way to market. People experience considerable challenges. A museum in the sense of being somewhere really special. Important to look at job creation too, green businesses and visitor economy.
NT – Managing change but not losing significance. Need to understand what's important and why people value it. Look to the NPs to deliver this, and think they're in a good position to deliver it.

Interaction between people and place – it's a dynamic – looking back, the two biggest changes for conservation were from spring to winter cereals, and traditional hay meadow to big bag silage. Former driven by market demands, latter by better technology. NPs won't influence either of these, demonstrates NPs constrained ability to bring about change.

NT – Biggest change to landscape has been upland forestry.
CNP – If you know change is coming, you can sometimes direct it.

Managing change without losing significance. Environment Bill, NRW creation, piloting of NRM areas. Looking to the long-term, will NRM be the method to manage change without losing significance, what about designations?

NT - The suite of measures have done a really good job of maintaining our most valuable things. Need a good framework. We see designated landscapes as a testing ground, to start thinking about NR planning. They've got the tools, the local buy-in the understanding of what's important. Designation gives the framework to test this. Danger of losing credibility internationally. Designations give reputation for Wales of responsible caring.

Are there positive approaches as well as being preventative? Where is the distinctiveness of designated areas, as higher level, within a wider context of NRM everywhere? Why would we need DLs in this context?

RSPB – Agri environment schemes. Tir Eryri is an example of a scheme which actually worked. Probably because it was local, part of a distinctive area where connections were made between the Park and the land managers. Good example of a NP being an exemplar. Works best because all the connections are already made. People on the ground were there – officers there to talk to the farmers.

NT – Community seamless working with the NP. E.g. Ysbyty estate – coherence and integration with the NP, same ambitions within the distinctiveness of the Park.

Increasing visitor pressure and more diverse activity?

NT – Sees as a fantastic opportunity. Better dialogue. More engagement in the landscape. Opportunity to learn. Come back and don't destroy what they've come to enjoy.

RSPB – Nature deficit disorder – benefits of getting people out into wild places. The critical thing is the priority of purpose – Sandford principle.

CNP – Parks are being pro-active to go out to people. E.g. Mosaic project funded by Lottery, Parks and YHA – original idea borne out of conference in Snowdonia. Identifies community champions who then sell the message to their communities.

Would very much like to see this mainstreamed – Parks are for everybody and at the moment, they're not. NRW is obvious body to lead on engagement at a national level, and the national guardian for that.

RSPB – Inevitable conflicts between the uses of the Park. Growing issue of mountaineering, coastering. There are activities which are acceptable but within constraints. Need clarification about how to prioritise within the purposes of the Park.

Possible extension of Purposes?

CNP – Not wedded to precise wording, it's the concept. Recognise that the first purpose is crucial. Then, we have maintained the enjoyment and understanding principle, to include physical and mental wellbeing. Ecosystem services – not recognised in 1949, important to safeguard. Economic development – must acknowledge the role in NPs in providing economic benefit. But absolutely mustn't undermine the prime purpose. A recognition of what they offer. But depends on trust that NPAs operate this properly. Last 2 purposes – wellbeing and socio economic – to 'promote' and not 'have regard to', i.e. being positive about it.

Designated areas deliver many vitally important ecosystem services.

Q to CNP – We've lost the concept of a populous movement – is tranquillity an inclusive or an exclusive concept? Is it deliverable across the whole of all the Parks?

CNP - Inclusive because a lot of people value tranquillity and come to the parks because of it. would be put off if they couldn't find that tranquillity – It's something NPs offer that a lot of other places can't.

Possible across a whole Park?

RSPB – Might be a challenge. Offering the opportunity for tranquillity is critically important. And to see the night sky. And to be able to look out to sea without lots of powerboats. So that there's enough space to have different experiences of NPs.

NT – Experience of theatrical venture at Hafod y Llan – criticised because of destroying tranquillity, but NT felt that it was overwhelmingly positive in terms of getting people out into the landscape who wouldn't otherwise have been there.

RSPB – Space for tranquillity is important.

CNP – Wouldn't get tranquillity everywhere, but the concept is important. To visitors and residents.

Need to look to choosing words very carefully. 'Promote'....

CNP – Used the word deliberately because we want to do something positive about it. Could be PR, could be Mosaic, or seeing where our interests overlap with health services. First purpose is over-arching, so it's a bit different.

Purposes are the core. An opportunity to go beyond political cycles.

RSPB – Biggest thing is climate change resilience. Natural beauty is a nice catch-all term. Growing awareness of the impacts of our actions, locally and global. There's a gap here – something about climate change resilience.

But if this is the primary purpose, isn't there a danger this would push through an inappropriate energy scheme?

RSPB – Yes. A complicated system. But if we acknowledge climate change resilience is the most important thing, we have to grapple with this.

NT – Key theme also should be more collaboration between organisations, e.g. travel planning. Refresh of the current system. Greater input of voluntary organisations to decision-making.

S62 and S85 duties – asking all public the bodies to promote and/or have regard to NP’s purposes – should we be asking what those other bodies are doing to fulfil this?

CNP – Yes, should expect that other organisations should set out how they will promote the purposes of designated landscapes will set out how they’ll meet other organisations’ goal for that geographical area. To see where they could - and could not - be joined up.

Does this cut both ways i.e. should DLs promote or have regard to other organisations purposes?

CNP - Yes, DL could set out where they can help meet other public organisations’ goals for that area, e.g. goals in Wellbeing of Future Generation Bill, economic planning.

Management plan framework including monitoring and reporting could be used for this.

Wider set of purposes, and Sandford Principle, and duties conferred on others

NT – Isn’t this where there’s real potential for collaborative working?

RSPB views?

RSPB – Our concern is for loss of designations in the context of extreme biodiversity loss, so NPs and AONBs have a primary purpose to make things better – not just hold the line. Lawton Review – we need more and better sites, and connected – NPs work across all of those. Bring together lots of special sites under an umbrella. Allow for buffering of them. But just don’t know at the moment how well they’re performing against their primary function because we haven’t monitored them properly.

So we don’t know how successful or how vulnerable they are?

RSPB – Has done some work in England and found that by a number of different measures, it’s not substantially different to other parts of the countryside. Needs more work to find out if it’s actually true. But also need to take off pressure in the wider countryside. Reinforcing/reinstating Sandford would be positive.

NT – Need to look at the purposes, decide priorities, consider interdependencies within the purposes. Basically, it’s time to do this. A much welcomed review.

Has Sandford been invoked to enhance? It has been to conserve. Seems that enhanced is being seen as increasingly important.

RSPB and NT support additional purposes. The fear is a loophole that allows erosion of the primary purpose.

CNP – Ecosystem services purpose is attempting to tackle climate change.

RSPB – Potential for NPs to play an increasingly important role in ecosystem services.

CNP – would be a very good thing if other organisations reported on their ‘duty’ (see above as well?).

Q for CNP – more about the link with European Convention?

CNP – It's all about people in the landscape, sharing best practice, public participation in landscape management. As it's there, and UK is signed up to it, and designated landscapes are already delivering part of it, it would be beneficial to make the connection between it and the review. Could be in a policy statement, or in policy. Would provide a European framework for Welsh DLs and Might enable stronger links with other European designated landscapes including joint projects and therefore off funding opportunities.

Should the same purposes apply to AONBs and NPs? If so, why have 2 designations? Why did we think this would result in NPs being downgraded? Could all go up.

RSPB – Equal by planning policy. Share the same primary purpose. Don't think RSPB views them as having different status; it's just the way they're delivered that is different. Different sizes.

NT – Nervous of direction of travel. If all get more resources, that's fine, but not if vice versa. AONBs are different to NPs, some have more similarities to NPs than others. NPs – much more clear what they are. Worry that it might dilute the brand.

RSPB – Streamlining might take away some of the responsibilities that brings them down in what they can achieve.

CNP – Concerned about losing the brand and iconic status of NPs as well potential impact on resources. AONBs not a second tier - equal but different. Different challenges and opportunities. Hard to see WG agreeing to AONBs having planning powers, and would hate to see NPs losing them.

NT – Yes, similar purposes if they all go up.

Need a designation that works for the next 60 years. Not thinking about the management arrangements.

RSPB – If you could put the issues of cost and disruption to one side, if we could have AONBs to the standard of NPs, that would be a great thing. Research suggests NPs are more effective about what they do. Don't know if that translates to nature conservation. But does work as a management structure.

NT – Designated landscapes bring a lot to Wales. Hoping someone in Government is keeping an eye on all the separate parts of WG legislation going through.

CNP – A lot of scope for people working together, even though we're against a single designation e.g. sharing expertise, physical connections (green corridors for people and nature), corporate funding and sponsorship, joint marketing, etc.).

NT – There are many other areas in Wales recognised as of great value – there's a potential vision for the future. Shouldn't just be the static map of Wales as it is now. Look back at some of the original sites considered, look at Landmap and sites identified more recently as national and international value.

FINAL MESSAGES

NT – Enhancement example - Freshwater West in Pembrokeshire – shows enhancements are possible. Strong partnership between NP, NT and ?.

CNP – Really important that the review is inclusive as possible; happy to facilitate engagement of community champions. Role of NRW – if we're going to move forwards in an innovative way, e.g. joining up AONB and NP management plans, NRW needs to be taking a lead in this.